



Joe W Burke Sr., 90, passed away on Tuesday, October 8, 2024, in Roswell, NM. Please take a moment and share a kind thought or memory with Joe's family at www.BallardFuneralhome.com.

Graveside services will be held on Monday, October 14, 2024, at South Park Cemetery at 2:00pm. The viewing will be from held at Ballard Funeral Home on Monday from 9 am to 12pm.

Joe was born on March 20, 1934, to Clayborne and Liddy (Sarah Elizabeth Schooley) Burke, in Hobbs, New Mexico. He lived the remainder of his life in New Mexico. Most of his early years were spent in Hobbs, NM. When Joe was 10 years old, he and his family moved to Roswell, NM.

Joe's siblings include: six sisters, Viola Shank, Novelle Smith, Eva Brown, Claudia Cooper, Bea Dederick, and Nell Ramey; four brothers, Bill Burke, CL Burke, Robert Burke, and Jerry Burke.

As a young man in his teens, Joe would hang out with Bobby Rich and Joe Dees. Dad talked about their epic adventures when they were teens. He was a fearless individual. Thankfully, he gained common sense as he grew into manhood.

While at Roswell High School Joe meet Virginia Dunbar his high school sweetheart. After graduation they got married and started a family. Their children include Joe and Debbie Burke, Jr., (Oscar, LA) Denise and Jim Lerg (Manistee, MI) and Barbara Kowalkowski (Manistee, MI).

Over the next few years starting in 1952, Joe worked for Sears and Roebucks in the appliance repair department and at a furniture repair shop where his passion for woodworking was ignited.

In August of 1958, Joe got an opportunity to join the New Mexico Highway Department as part of the road crew and then he advanced his way through the ranks to become the District Surveyor for Southeast New Mexico. He started taking correspondence classes at nights and on the weekends till he was able to graduate with a degree in Surveying.

Joe loved being able to be outside in nature whether it was for Surveying, hunting or camping. His other passion was woodworking.

In 1969 Joe meet Marcia Zeluke at her uncle's bowling alley in Albuquerque, NM.

Over time Joe and Marcia grew closer, and they got married in November of 1970 and had a daughter named Sarah Horwitz (Dallas).

Though out the years he was stationed all around New Mexico. Joe retired from the New Mexico Highway Department in 1985 due to health reasons.

After retiring he started his second act in life by starting up a small engine repair business. He also honed his woodworking skills by make furniture and wooden toys for his kids and grandkids. He also helped out some of his former co-workers flip houses.

Joe was a deeply devote Christian. He was a member of the Assembly of God Church. He loved studying the Bible and always had his commentaries with him and loved to have conversations with others about the Bible whether he agreed with their views or not.

Joe is preceded in death by his parents Clayborne and Liddy Burke and sibling Anette Burke, Viola Shank, Novelle Smith, Eva Brown, Claudia Cooper, Bea Dederick, and Nell Ramey, CL Burke, and Robert Burke. He is also preceded Virginia Dunbar, Marcia Zeluke, son-in-law Dale Kowalkowski, several cousins, nephews and nieces.

Joe is survived by his brothers Bill Burke (California) and Jerry and Carole Burke (Clovis, NM), children Joe Jr. and Debbie Burke, (Oscar, LA) Denise and Jim Lerg (Manistee, MI), Barbara Kowalkowski (Manistee, MI), and Sarah and Scott Horwitz (Dallas) as well as numerous grand-children, great grand-children, cousins, nieces and nephews.